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Memorandum

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FU 10/9

To: Stephen Berger, Executive Director
From: Phil LaRocco
Date: September 14, 1987
Subject: THE WORLD TRADE CENTER - ONE & TWO WTC LOBBIES - OCCUPANCY BY COUNTERS - NEW YORK CITY CODE VARIANCE
Reference:
Copy To: N. Budieri, P. Falvey, S. Frigand, L. Gambaccini, L. Liburdi, R. Linn, K. MacKay, D. Montalbano, R. Monti, H. O'Neill, V. Strom, D. Twiss, J. Vanacore, S. Van de Walle

FU 11/20

The Towers of the World Trade Center house approximately 80 percent of the occupants of the World Trade Center. The lobbies of these buildings serve as entrances to the Towers for occupants and visitors alike. Because of their centralized locations, they are ideal places to locate services commonly used by, and which support the activities of the World Trade Center's occupants. Specifically, in One World Trade Center there are counters for: Information/Elevator Console, Windows on the World Restaurant coat check, and a variety of airline and related ticket sales activities. In Two World Trade Center there are counters for: Information/Elevator Console, ticket sales for the Observation Deck and New York City Theatres, Satellite Couriers specializing in speedy delivery of packages such as Federal Express, and a proposed tenant information counter for Dean Witter.

The counters described above are in conformance with the New York City Building Code, specifically Section 27-370(h)(4) (formerly C26-604.3(h)(4) which permits street floor lobbies serving as exit passageways to be occupied by newsstands, candy and tobacco stands, information booths or similar occupancies. Among other requirements, this code section limits the extent of this occupancy to 5 percent of the net floor area of the lobby.

The tenant that has installed and operates the airline ticket sales counters has requested permission to install three additional counters. The addition of these counters to the One World Trade Center lobby would increase the occupancy of the counters in the lobby to 5.8 percent of the net floor area which is in excess of the 5 percent stated in the New York City Code.

It is my intention to allow the code variance and permit the tenant to install the three additional counters. In addition, it is requested that the World Trade & Economic Development Department be permitted to install additional counters, or similar occupancies as deemed appropriate, in the lobbies of both One and Two World Trade Center with the limitation that these occupancies do not exceed 10 percent of the net floor area of the lobby/mezzanine. For the reasons discussed below, the above actions will not adversely impact safe evacuation of the building's occupants during an emergency.

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- Building occupants exiting the Towers during a fire emergency utilize the fire stairs and not elevators unless they are under the supervision of members of the New York City Fire Department.

- Exiting from Fire Stairway B is at ground floor level into the central corridor serving the local elevators for floors 9 to 40. This corridor is separated from the counters by the two hour fire rated construction of the elevator shafts except for a 19 foot distance at the West Street/Liberty Street end and a 32 foot distance at the Concourse end. Exiting is optional and in either direction. Because of the screening of the exit path afforded by the elevator shafts, and the availability of alternate egress paths, the increase of counter space in the lobby adjoining the express elevators from 5.0% to 10.0% causes no significant increase in exposure to World Trade Center occupants.

- Exiting from Fire Stairways A and C is at the Mezzanine level. Optional, alternative egress paths to exit doors to the exterior exist. These egress paths are shielded from the counters by the two hour fire rated construction of the mezzanine floor and the non-combustible railing. A five story ceiling space exists above the mezzanine within which heat and smoke can accumulate without threatening occupants egressing via the exit paths and the mechanical ventilation system can be set to smoke purge mode to evacuate the smoke. Because of the fire rated construction of the mezzanine, the large void above the mezzanine, and the availability of alternate egress paths, the increase of counter space from 5.0% to 10.0% causes no significant increase in exposure to World Trade Center occupants.

- All future counters installed at the lobby level would be situated to be under the mezzanine. Their location and sizing shall be such as to assure generous aisles and spaces for the free flow movement of the public through the lobby and mezzanine areas.

- Material used in the construction of the counters shall be non-combustible or, if combustible, they shall comply with the New York City Building Code Section 27-348 (formerly C26-504.10) for combustion characteristics.

- The lobby is under surveillance on a 24-hour basis by security personnel equipped with two-way radios capable of reporting emergency incidents. Unique to the World Trade Center, response is immediate and by: Port Authority Police capable of directing the public and building occupants away from the emergency area; and by a Fire Brigade prepared to bring small

- o The Engineering Department is currently preparing contract drawings and specifications to install sprinklers at the underside of the mezzanines which would provide immediate fire fighting response to fires that might originate in those areas.

- o Although the counter space would be 10.0% of the net floor area of the lobby/mezzanine, because of the height of the lobby (73 ft.), it is estimated the counters would represent only 1.0 to 1.5% of the volume of the lobby.

As indicated in the foregoing, the vast size of the lobbies, the shielding of egress paths provided by two hour fire rated construction and other fire safety provisions related to the lobbies all combine to provide protected egress to exits for the building occupants beyond the minimums prescribed by the code. It is therefore requested that the above described code variance be alloved as the proposed increase in occupancy by counters, or other similar occupancies, would not diminish the protection provided by these egress paths.

An agenda item will be prepared for presentation of this item to the Commissioners.

Phil LaRocco
Director
World Trade & Economic Development

Concurred:

9/17/87
Director of Engineering

9/18/87
Assistant Executive Director/ General Counsel

11.12.87

(Board - 11/12/87)

(537)

The World Trade Center - One and Two World Trade Center Lobbies/Mezzanines - Change in Limits of Counter Occupancies

A request has been received for permission to install three additional counters in the lobby of One World Trade Center, which would increase occupancy of counters to 5.8% of the net floor area. The existing counters in the lobby of One World Trade Center occupy 5% of the net floor area, consistent with the New York City Building Code, which limits such occupancies to 5% of the net floor area. The counters in Two World Trade Center occupy less than 5% of the net floor area.

In addition to satisfying the current request for the installation of additional counters in the lobby of One World Trade Center, an increase to 10% in the limit of lobby and mezzanine space that can be used for counter occupancy would permit optimum use of lobby space for services to building occupants as well as more productive use of mezzanine space.

Staff has performed a life safety analysis for the lobbies of One and Two World Trade Center and has concluded that the vast size of the lobbies in conjunction with existing safety conditions, facilities and procedures ensure that the present level of protection of egress will not be diminished by an increase of counter occupancies of up to 10% of the net floor area.

Whereupon, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

RESOLVED, that the Board authorizes an increase from 5% to 10% in the limit of the net floor area of each of the lobbies/mezzanines of One and Two World Trade Center that can be used for the installation of counters or similar occupancies.

Time-Lobbies